

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

The regular meeting of the San Joaquin County Medical Society was held Friday evening, September 10th, at the Hotel Lincoln, Dr. R. T. McGurk presiding in the absence of the president and vice-president. Those present were: Drs. R. T. McGurk, B. J. Powell, N. E. Williamson, J. T. Davison, L. R. Johnson, L. Haight, J. W. Barnes, F. S. Marnell, W. C. Adams, Grace McCoskey, W. T. McNeil, H. C. Peterson, Minerva Goodman, H. J. Bolinger, J. P. Martin, J. E. Nelson, J. D. Dameron, E. A. Arthur and D. R. Powell, Dr. Chapman of Stockton and Dr. R. Peers of Colfax as guests.

A letter was read from the League for the Conservation of Public Health, in which the four anti-public health initiative measures were discussed. Concerning the last communication, Dr. Goodman, representing the Red Cross, stated that that organization was having display space at the County Fair and volunteered to use part of the wall space for any placards that might call the public's attention to the advisability of defeating the anti-public health measures. A committee of three, consisting of Dr. Goodman, Dr. R. T. McGurk and Dr. D. R. Powell, was appointed to cooperate with the Red Cross in making such display against these measures.

There being no further business, the chairman introduced the speaker of the evening, Dr. Robert Peers of Colfax, who spoke on "Artificial Pneumothorax in the Treatment of Pulmonary Tuberculosis." He spoke of his experience at Colfax, where they had used the method only in those cases where the ordinary procedure had failed to give relief, the patient going down hill rapidly. It was used first to produce rest to the affected lung, second, to apply pressure to a bleeding point; third, to remove toxic fluid and replace air to prevent adhesions.

He spoke of the difficulties in the method and some of the technical dangers and the long period of treatment necessary and a great economic loss. He reported the statistics of 112 cases, showing the number improved, and the figures and results more than justified the effort made. There was a very general discussion, after which Dr. Peers courteously answered many questions.

Before adjourning the secretary called the attention of the members of the society to the fact that our first vice-president, Dr. Hudson Smythe, had recently been guilty of matrimony, and it was moved, seconded and carried that the secretary express, on behalf of the society, their felicitations on the happy event. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 to partake of light refreshments and a social hour.

STANISLAUS COUNTY

Members of the Stanislaus County Medical Society met Friday night, October 8, for their regular monthly meeting at the Hotel Modesto. A fine banquet was served, after which Dr. Harrington B. Graham, professor at Stanford University, delivered an address on "The Effects of Nasal Stenoses," which was thoroughly appreciated by the twenty-two members present.

The society meets on the second Friday of each month and all doctors in Stanislaus county are invited to become members.

Department of Pharmacy and Chemistry

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Help the propaganda for reform by prescribing official preparations. The committees of the U. S. P. and N. F. are chosen from the very best therapeutists, pharmacologists, pharmacognosists and pharmacists. The formulae are carefully worked out and the products tested in scientifically equipped laboratories under the very best conditions. Is it not plausible to assume that these preparations are, at least, as good as those evolved with far inferior facilities by the mercenary nostrum maker who claims all the law will allow?

Dr. Harvey W. Wiley is a prominent figure in the movement to deprive physicians of the right to prescribe and the druggists to dispense alcoholic liquors. Anything that Dr. Wiley says will receive careful consideration from many millions of thinking people, and any movement he backs is liable to succeed unless there be organized and determined opposition. Dr. Wiley's reasons are not those of the rabid prohibitionist. He would make the change to maintain the good name of physician and pharmacist. He points out that, though a very large majority of all physicians and pharmacists are careful and law abiding, there would always be a certain number who would do anything for the almighty dollar, and already the public is beginning to state that anybody with the money to pay the physician's fee can get a prescription for liquor whether he need it or not. Dr. Wiley would have the right to prescribe relegated to official physicians, either those of the Army, Navy or Public Health Service, or physicians appointed especially for this purpose and prescriptions to be supplied only in a central Federal dispensary. Dr. Wiley does not consider the tremendous inconvenience to which the patient would be put or the great opportunity for graft and political intrigue in such a system. Nor does Dr. Wiley consider the great leverage which acts of this kind would give the arguments of the Christian Scientists, anti-vivisectionists and anti-vaccinationists. If the physician cannot be trusted in a matter of this sort, these people would argue that he cannot be trusted in more important matters involving life or death. Besides such action would probably soon lead to similar action as regards narcotics and the physician would find himself deprived of the right to use drugs which are absolutely necessary. The physician should bear in mind that the crisis may be reached at any time, and he should do his best to prove that the physician is worthy of his trust. The druggist is altogether in the hands of the physician. Unfortunately, there are a certain number of so-called drug stores which are more interested in selling liquor than in selling drugs, and already at least one grocery firm has opened a drug store and openly advertised in the public press, soliciting this business. The physician can soon stop this if he will. The regulations require that the physician must state upon the prescription the name of the druggist who is to fill the prescription. Many physicians have hesitated doing this, notwithstanding the law, for they feel that it appears as though they were trying to force the patient in a particular store. However, the physician can ask the patient where he wishes the prescription filled, and if he wants it filled at a reputable store he can then put that name on the prescription. If he finds that the patient wants it filled at a liquor store masquerading as a drug store, he can call the matter to the attention of the patient and absolutely refuse to send prescription to such a place. If the physician will do this, and if the physician will remember that whether he favors prohibition or not, the Eighteenth Amendment is the supreme law of the land, Dr. Wiley's movement will undoubtedly fail.

However, quite a few physicians and druggists would welcome any change by which they would be taken out of the liquor business. A physician finds it rather unpleasant to refuse the request of an old friend or patient for a whiskey prescription, especially if he likes a cocktail or highball occasionally himself. The reputable druggist finds that the red tape, petty annoyances and responsibility more than make up for the profit he makes on the sale of liquor, and he would welcome the establishment of a Federal dispensary excepting that it would still further interfere with the legitimate use of alcohol in pharmaceutical preparations and would establish a bad precedent.